

Prabuddha Bharata

दक्षिणत जाग्रत



प्राग्य वराशिषोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

XVI.

[Place—Belur, monastery in a rented house.

Year—1898, November.

Subjects—*The visit to Amarnath in Kashmir.—Hearing of the Divine Voice of the Goddess and giving up of all planning from the mind.—Existence of departed spirits.—Not proper to entertain the desire of seeing ghosts and other spirits of the departed.—The vision of a departed spirit by Swamiji and rescuing him by Sraddha and mental prayer.]*

Swamiji has returned from Kashmir two or three days ago. His health is indifferent. When the disciple came to the Math, Swami Brahmananda said, "Since returning from Kashmir Swamiji does not speak to anybody, he sits in one place rapt in thought; you go to him and by talking and conversations try to draw his mind a little towards worldly objects.

The disciple coming to Swamiji's room in the upper story saw—Swamiji sitting in *mukta padmāsana* posture, and as if immersed in deep meditation. There is no smile on his face, his brilliant eyes have no

outward look, as if intent on seeing something inside. Seeing the disciple he only said, "You have come, my son, take your seat," and lapsed into silence. The disciple seeing the inside of his left eye reddened asked, "How is it that your eye is coloured red?" "That is nothing," saying this he again sat silent. Even when after sitting a long time Swamiji did not speak, the disciple got very impatient with grief and touching his feet said, "Won't you relate to me whatever you have seen and met with at Amarnath?" By the disciple's touching his feet, the tensivity of his mood was broken a little;

as if his attention was diverted a little externally. He said, "Since visiting Amarnath I feel as if Siva is sitting on my head for twenty-four hours." The disciple heard it with speechless wonder.

Swamiji.— I made great religious austerity and practices at Amarnath and Kshir Bhavani. Go and get me a *chellum* of tobacco, I will relate everything to you.

The disciple, very pleased, and in obedience to his behests prepared and gave him tobacco. Swamiji slowly smoking began to say, "On the way to Amarnath, I made a very steep ascent of the road; by that path, the pilgrims do not generally travel. But the determination came upon me that I must go by that path and as the resolve so I did. The labour of the strenuous ascent has told on my body. It is so biting cold there, that you feel like pin-pricks.

Disciple.— I have heard that one has to visit the Image of Amarnath naked, is it so?

Swamiji.— Yes, I entered the cave with only my *kaupin* on and my body smeared with the holy ash; I did not then feel any heat or cold. When I came out of the temple, I was benumbed by the cold.

Disciple.— Did you see the 'holy' pigeons? I have heard, in that cold no living creatures are found to live there, but a flock of pigeons from some unknown place frequent the place occasionally.

Swamiji.— Yes, I saw three or four white pigeons; whether they live in the cave or the neighbouring hills I could not ascertain.

Disciple.— Sir, I have heard people say that the sight of pigeons on coming out of the temple indicates that you are really blessed with the vision of Siva.

Swamiji said, 'so I have heard, the sight of the pigeons brings what desires you entertain to fruition.'

Then Swamiji said, on the way back he returned to Srinagar by the general road by which the pilgrims return. Few days after returning to Srinagar he went to visit Kshir Bhavani Devi and staying there for seven days worshipped the Devi and made Homa to her with offerings of *kshir* (condensed milk). Every day he used to worship the Devi with a maund of *kshir* as offering. One day while worshipping the thought arose in Swamiji's mind, "Mother Bhavani has been manifesting Her Presence here for untold years. The Yavanas came and destroyed Her temple yet the people of the place did nothing to protect Her. Alas, if I were then living, I could never have borne it silently"—thinking in this strain, his mind was much pained and oppressed by pangs of sorrow and grief, then he distinctly heard the voice of the Mother saying, "According to My desire, the Yavanas have destroyed the temple. It is My desire that I live in a dilapidated temple, can I not erect a seven-storied temple of gold here if I so desire? What can you do? Shall I protect you or shall you protect me!! Swamiji said, "Since hearing that Divine Voice, I keep and cherish no more plans. The idea of building Maths etc. I have given up; whatever Mother wills, so it will be." The disciple speechless with wonder began to think, did he not one day tell me, "Whatever you see and hear is but the reflection and echo of your Inward Self, there is nothing outside"?—and fearlessly spoke it out also—"Sir, you say that Divine Voices are the echo of our inward thoughts and feelings." Swamiji being grave said, "Whether it be internal or external, if you actually hear with your

ears as I have done, such a disembodied voice, can you deny it and call it false? Divine Voices are actually heard, just as you and I are talking, likewise.

The disciple without controverting accepted Swamiji's words; for there was such a persuasive force in his words that one could not but accept them; before the force of his words, argument and reasoning were all swept away.

The disciple now brought up the subject of departed spirits. He said, "Sir, these ghosts and departed spirits we hear about, which the Shastras corroborate time and again, are all these true or not?"

Swamiji.— Certainly they are true. Whatever we don't see, are they all false for that? Beyond your sight, millions of universes are revolving at great distances. Because you do not see, are they non-existent for that? But then, do not put your mind on these subjects of ghosts and spirits. Your mental attitude should be that ghosts exist, but I have no concern with them. Your real work is—to realise the Atman within this body. When you realise this Atman, ghosts and spirits will all be your slaves.

Disciple.— But, Sir, I think that a sight of them will strengthen my belief in the hereafter, and all doubts about the hereafter will vanish.

Swamiji.— You are great souls; even you have to strengthen your belief in the 'hereafter' by ghosts and spirits! You have read so many sciences and scriptures—have mastered so many secrets of this wide universe—even with such knowledge, you have to acquire the knowledge of the Atman by the study of ghosts and spirits! What a shame!

Disciple.— Well, Sir, have you ever seen ghosts and spirits?

Swamiji narrated that a certain deceased relative of his used to come to him as a disembodied spirit. Sometimes it used to bring to him information about distant events. But on verification, some of its informations were not found to be correct. Afterwards at a certain place of pilgrimage he prayed for it mentally wishing it might be released—since then he did not see it again.

The disciple then questioned Swamiji if Sráddha or other *postmortem* ceremonies appeased the departed spirits in any way. Swamiji replied, "That is not impossible." On the disciple's asking for the grounds of that belief Swamiji said, "I will explain the subject to you at length some day. There are irrefutable arguments on the point that the Sráddha ceremony appeases the departed beings. Today I don't feel well I shall explain it to you another day." But the disciple did not get another opportunity in life to ask that question of Swamiji.

What is death? What are terrors? Do not you see the Lord's face in them? Fly from evil and terror and misery and they will follow you. Face them and they will flee. The whole world worships ease and pleasure and very few dare to worship that which is painful. To rise above both is the idea of freedom. Unless man passes through this gate he cannot be free. We all have to face these. We strive to worship the Lord, but the body rises between, Nature rises between Him and us and blinds our vision. We must learn how to worship and love Him in the thunderbolt, in shame, in sorrow, in sin. All the world has ever been preaching the God of virtue. I preach a God of virtue and a God of sin in one. Take Him if you dare,—that is the one way to salvation; then alone will come to us the Truth Ultimate which comes from the idea of oneness.

—Vivekananda.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE writer of an interesting article in the April issue of 'Modern Review,' takes exception to the Rectorial address where His Excellency the Governor of Bengal has suggested of giving a place to Indian philosophy in the curricula of undergraduate studies in the University and thus diminishing the preponderating place which the study of Western philosophy occupies. The learned writer argues that Western philosophy should be retained as part of undergraduate studies, and relegates the study of Indian philosophy to a subsequent period! He argues at length why the study of Indian philosophy is not likely to be beneficial to the Indian student in his undergraduate days.

The writer first objects to the divine character of our Scripture as likely to be a drawback in the study of the philosophy in that it seeks to impose its dogma and demands unquestioning allegiance to its principles; but rightly understood not only does it not mean to stifle independent thinking, but it gives the greatest scope and incentive to one's power of reasoning. The divine character of the scriptures like the Vedas is not one invested from outside by the authority of any personality, but their divinity is based on the authority of the eternal principles of spiritual laws which were discovered by certain seers. Their authority is the authority of eternal principles and challenges verification as any scientific truth of the latest time. As such they are as conformable to the canons of logical reasoning as any other subject of human research. The Vedas themselves say that they are

the *expiration* of the Great Being. What other books are more thoroughgoing in their devotion to truth as when they say that for the highest goal, even the Vedas themselves have to be transcended, showing their tentative character as guide-posts on the way to truth.

But our Scriptures have in the interests of the Truth which they have to serve, placed Intuition and inspiration above the tyranny of the intellect. Their thesis is that the Truth is beyond the pale of the intellect, and is not to be attained by much "reading of the Vedas" or by the process of ratiocination. By that they do not seek to palm off any and everything as inspiration upon credulous mankind, but they challenge verification of their truth like any scientific truth. They also say that their truths do not contradict reasoning but are quite conformative. True inspiration although transcending, does not contradict reason. Therefore we find all our commentators and philosophers throwing the scorching light of reason on the Vedas and reasoning, harmonising, explaining and placing everything on rational foundations. The play of reasoning on the part of commentators seems to us to be as free and unfettered as of any rationalist of the modern times; but unlike the rationalist with his iconoclastic creed and zeal for breaking down every article of faith and creed and reducing men to a mass of negations, glorying in believing in nothing except the life of comfortable senses, reason in the hands of our commentators have resulted in sifting the contents of our scriptures, harmonising

and co-ordinating their different parts, and eventually drawing out live-growing principles of constructive living. Perhaps our 'Hindu Master of Arts' is not aware that all parts of the Vedas are not of equal authority. Those which are traditional or of mere historical import, or those which constitute mere incentive to action, are relegated in Vedic exegesis to a subordinate position to those which deal with the eternal principles, Soul, God etc. In books of Vedantic philosophy the highest honour is shown to reasoning and *vichara*. In one passage in the Yogavasistha it is said in so many words, "Accept what comes from a boy if it is supported by reason; but reject unmercifully what proceeds even from the mouth of Brahma, if unsupported by reason." So our philosophy gives the fullest scope to reasoning and the examination of its contents but all is based on reverence of those ancient scriptures, the Vedas, which not being a systematised philosophy, but records of inspirations of different Seers, contain germs of the most varied systems of thought, as have been deduced later by subsequent Acharyas. How far the power of reasoning in the hands of any *adhikāri*, unattended by wholesome checks of reverence for competent authority is an unmixed blessing and advances the well-being of mankind, we are not sure. The Vedas again being the central books which are looked upon with veneration by all propounders of philosophical systems, many divergent schools of thought have been deduced from them. They freely criticise and examine rationally their respective contents throwing the full flood of reasoning on them, and one may ally himself to any school to which his reasoning may take him, and yet remain a Hindu. The

fact that all systems owe allegiance to the Vedas has not in practice constituted a limitation to the exercise of independent thinking; the Vedas containing the germs of all shades of thought have given the amplest scope to independent thinking, as shown by diverse systems of thought having sprung from it. The reverence paid to the Vedas by the propounders of all schools of thought by allying themselves to them has served the purpose of unifying our culture, imparting to it a wonderful eclecticism and giving a richness and variety of type all based on an underlying unity. It has also constituted a great integrating factor in our civilisation which has held it together despite the disruptive influences which have surrounded it during long periods of history.

[The strongest reason why Indian philosophy ought to occupy a prominent place in the education of the Indian student is that it represents his own culture and the mental elements of his own being, the evolution of centuries of national existence. So before meeting the world in the face, he has to be firm-grounded in his own being, to know what he is, to be established in his strength, then only can he really accept, assimilate, truths from other sources. But if he starts with a want of faith in his own culture, not knowing the evolution of his own mind and culture, he will be thrown quite in the sea in the mass of the thought-systems of the world, not knowing their adaptability to his own evolution or their relation to it, he will not be able to make any organic synthesis out of them, but will be living a sort of jelly-fish existence, taking up scraps here and there, without their blending with his own mental constitution and

crystallising into an organic thought-system. Our 'Hindu Master of Arts,' seems to think that one can build thought-systems which will be dynamic in the lives of individuals in the air without reference to their past culture and inheritance; in that he displays ignorance of all elementary principles of human progress. The man whose moral and cultural backbone is broken by want of faith in his cultural inheritance, who thinks his own life and the life of his ancestors has been a tissue of mistakes, is a hopeless being of whom one cannot make anything, even if one feeds him daily on the ambrosia of the thought-systems of other types of culture. So we think that if we want the Indian student to really benefit by his study of Western philosophy and thought-systems, and make them operative principles of life, not merely to take mental gymnastics and sing pæans of glory to his western Gurus at the expense of love, reverence and appreciation of his own culture, he has first and foremost to be grounded in his own thought-system, his own mental inheritance, nay his own *being*. Every culture and civilisation represents a distinct outlook on life, and reading of the universe, and all individuals within that cultural fold are the embodiments in degrees more or less of that ideal. It represents a part of the 'thought of God,' which he must hold on to and transmit to posterity, and in that mould his mental improvement has been cast through succeeding generations. To ask him to give up this cultural inheritance and to take up *harum-scarum* any other without reference to his own is impossible and if he succeeds in doing that he commits cultural suicide, digs his own grave to bury himself therein. He has no place then in the economy of Nature, represents no idea, he is soulless, lifeless, an automaton,

driven hither and thither by the world-forces. But on the basis of his own cultural strength, he can build the most rich and varied type of character by profiting by study of other thought-systems, and giving new expression to his own Idea in the forms of the New. Some of the fairest flowers of Indian manhood which have been produced as a result of this mingling of the ideals of the East and West beginning from Raja Ram Mohon Roy to the Swami Vivekananda of our days, are an auspicious foreboding of the rich promise of the future. In them the virtues of the East and West have blended in a harmonious ideal, who strong in the abstractedness and metaphysical speculation of the East, as in the virility, the intense practicability of the West, have by their rich and varied personality commanded the homage and allegiance of the East and West alike. Therefore Eastern philosophy as a builder of individual and national character is ten times more inspiring and effective in its appeal to Indian students that any system of thought borrowed from elsewhere.

Then the writer picks out some of the weak elements of present-day Hindu philosophy, the result of latter-day degeneration and misconception and argues that these not only diminish the usefulness of Hindu philosophy to the Indian graduate but are positively deleterious in their effects on their character. He says that the Indian philosophy by preaching the doctrine of Karma has dried up the fountains of activity and made people fatalistic. The doctrine of Karma on the other hand was brought in to explain the inequalities of life, pain, misery or happiness and joy, and the cause was laid on man's own exertions to evade the

cruel fiat of an All-powerful God. According to the Hindu philosophy, Karma is the expression of the freedom of man; if by my actions I have brought myself to a certain state, it lies also within me to undo my actions and by making new Karma I can determine my future. If by latter-day degeneration when vigour and strength went from national views, this excellent doctrine of Karma was distorted and used to hide the inactivity and inertia of people, it lies with men like the 'Hindu Master of Arts' to purge it of the pedantry which has infested it and place it in its true colour and not seek to shun this excellent and rational doctrine, the mine of strength and justice in its true form, as if it were a poison.

The writer then goes on to argue that Indian philosophy in its pessimistic trend, its tendency towards inaction will make the Indian undergraduate averse to worldly realities. Here again he labours under a gross misconception evidently borrowing his estimate of Indian philosophy from the catechisms of superficial critics of the West who have neither the intellectual breadth nor insight to appreciate cultural ideals besides their own. The highest ideals do not contemplate another world where perfection is to be attained or call this world illusory, or render its works and duties false and nugatory. Our philosophy calls human life as the best of lives, and this world as the best of worlds for here alone can right and unselfish Karma be performed, to break one's bondages and attain freedom,—this is the *Karma-bhumi*, according to our philosophy, and all others are merely *bhoga-bhumis*—to work off the fruits of Karma accumulated here. Sankara in his Vedanta argues against the idealism of the Buddhists, and says that this world

is only absolutely unreal, but phenomenally real; and only by working through it can we break the dream and awaken to reality—as it is said in the Bhagavad Gita—"not without initiating work can one attain to the state beyond work."—Therefore our philosophy understands that as long as we are within this phenomenal world, all continues and its *vyavahara*, its works and duties are as binding on us and as real as anything else. We admit with the writer that due to loss of national vigour false ideas and distorted notions have invaded our minds seeking to cover and apologise for our own weaknesses and inactivity. But the true way of resuscitating the lost vigour will not be found in cutting ourselves off from our culture and going in for other sources which do not belong to us by inheritance, but to divest the excrescence, the poisonous growths which have grown round our philosophy and place them in their true, strong, pure forms. Then its power for good, its intensity of appeal will be increased a hundredfold.

The fact, which the writer urges, that Oriental philosophy has accentuated the tendency towards the abstract, and barren speculations only and has not materialised in active concern in the realities of existence, is also a misstatement. It cannot be said that Hindus have in no part of their history shown greatness in the secular concerns of life. This is shown by their great achievement in secular science and arts, in their maritime activity, their municipal and imperial government, industry, politics, warfare, now being brought to light. Let us quote from a recent writer: "The historical truth is, that the Hindus cast their eyes equally on both wings of human life—they approached the problem

of the universe from both angles of vision. Hindu culture was as much the embodiment of the most intimate experience of the concrete, positive life as the expression of a thorough hair-splitting analysis of the Beyond or the transcendental realities. * * * The young India of to-day is like its illustrious predecessors of mediæval and ancient times, at once idealist and practical." Indeed it might well be asked how a philosophy which has evolved the idea of Karma Yoga, of work as being a method of realising the truth, which also looks upon all work as worship, which has evolved the conception of the Immanent God and His Universal form in the world, can be taxed with as being devoid of potentialities which will stimulate secular endeavour and success in practical life. If for a time the people were, by loss of vigour brought about by many circumstances, thrown too much on speculative absorption, a more all-round development and endeavour in all departments of activity is showing itself, and for this the inspiration is to be found in the contents of our own culture and philosophy, in the grand ideals of Karma-yoga as preached in the Gita and emphasised and restated by Indian reformers like Swami Vivekananda.

We have finished our remarks and before concluding let us say that we are no blind admirers of Indian systems of philosophy or civilisation, nor do we think that they are not capable of improvement. Neither do we want to see the India of the past, however great and glorious, live again in its old form now. We want to see the strength and glory of ancient India, reinforced by the strength, and wisdom of the present and find new expression in the forms of the present day. That there are

many defective and putrescent parts in our civilisation which have to be excised we admit, we also admit that we need greatly and shall benefit by the greatest exchange of thoughts and comparison of ideals with the West and that we have not done so for sometime has contributed to our present-day degeneration. But to say that there are not sufficient elements of strength and purity and nobility in our culture capable of infusing strength into us and from which we may draw life-giving inspiration, but that we should go for grounding in the principles of life and conduct and for the problems of life to Western philosophy and logic, and the study of our own systems of philosophy may come in afterwards as a corrective, is to pervert the whole perspective and values of things. The attitude of mind revealed by the writer that Indian culture and philosophy is of such a mischievous influence that it is to be shunned like a dangerous contagion and not approached without safeguards is very deplorable, the result of the loss of faith in his own culture without sufficient warrant, due to overmuch of schooling in the "Western science, philosophy and logic" of which he is such a great apologist. Against this attitude of mind and temper we enter our most emphatic protest; and the sooner it disappears and the less it is fostered by our universities the better for the country and its alumni. We find ourselves then at one with His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay's suggestion that Indian philosophy should justly find an important place in the curricula of undergraduate studies in our university side by side with, or posteriorly to Western systems of thought and philosophy, forming part of, the course of university studies.

FREE WILL AND PREDESTINATION.

Is man a tiny boat in a tempest, raised one moment on the foamy crest of a billow and dashed down into a yawning chasm the next, rolling to and fro at the mercy of good and bad actions—a powerless, helpless wreck in an ever-ranging, ever-rushing, uncompromising current of cause and effect, a little moth placed under the wheel of causation, which rolls on crushing everything in its way, and waits not for the widow's tears or the orphan's cry?—Swami Vivekananda.

THE doctrine of Karma has a wide application and connotation in Indian philosophy. It may mean the whole totality of causes by which the One has become the many, the Nirguna, transcendent Brahman has become manifested as the world of names and forms. In this sense it is coterminous with Maya, in this sense it is said to be *anadi* or existing from the beginning of creation. For the inscrutable power which by producing diversity of names and forms has manifested this visible world from the One, Nirguna, and unmanifested Brahman, must be said to be of the nature of Karma. This Karma once put in operation is unfailing in its actions and does not die without producing its corresponding result. Both the Sankhya and the Vedanta admit that the evolution of the universe from the Primal Nature has taken place in a certain order, according to certain laws—these laws are the laws of nature and they are infallible. Creation means the diversity of names and forms, and this diversity is produced by Karma or the law of causation and the future evolution of names and forms is all determined by the law of causation. Everything that has name and form is bound by this law of causation and as we find name and form

existing already whenever we see creation, we assume that this Karma exists concurrently with creation. By this law of Karma, the sun shines, the wind blows, the earth and the moon are revolving in their orbits, even gods are within this law of Karma. When this law of causation was first brought into operation, how it made the changeless, uncaused Brahman manifest name and forms we cannot say, but we see that once man falls into the net of Karma, the power of Karma is not destroyed but gives rise to a corresponding effect which again in its turn becomes the cause of another effect. The Karma of to-day is the cause of the Karma of to-morrow; and the Karma of to-morrow that of the day after. Once the wheel of Karma has been set in motion, there is no escape from suffering from its effects. According to Indian philosophy even the Lord does not interfere in the working out of Karma but only distributes fruits according to the nature of the Karma. Though we cannot say how Karma first arose and how men first fell into its net, from observing the unfailing effects of Karma,—each reaping as he sows, good, good, bad, bad, we infer that since creation man is held in the iron bondage of this law of causation.

What then becomes of the freedom of the will of man? If nature and its invariable laws are all that exists, then there is not a jot of freedom of the will of man. Whichever way the laws of the universe will draw him, he will have to move, and all ideas of immortality and freedom are mere figments of the imagination. Material philosophers who postulate no spiritual substances independent of matter and its

laws are forced to the conclusion of predestination. If they admit the operation of the laws of nature, it means that each precedent is invariably followed by a subsequent, each effect is produced by a cause which again was produced by another cause. This is Nature. Mind itself, according to these philosophers, being a phenomenon of Nature is as much bound by laws as anything else in the universe. This conformation to laws constitutes the whole rationality of mind. "If our thoughts are not the necessary results of preceding thoughts, if one state is not invariably followed by another which it produces, that mind we should say is irrational." How can the mind be rational i. e. governed by the laws of thought and yet admit of the will of the mind being free?

So it follows that within the phenomenal nature everything is governed by strict, unbending laws. Every thought and action is caused. That I am writing this is as much within causation as that you are reading this. We could not help it; we are forced by nature's laws to do these. The past thoughts that I have thought, the feelings that I have entertained have by their inevitable working out brought me to writing this article; and also your thoughts and feelings have produced in you the irresistible inclination to read this paper. So every thought and action of ours is caused, it is preceded by a chain of causes and effects which inevitably gives rise to that particular thought and action. If the whole of nature, mental or material is thus bound by laws, then we are in a prison of cause and effect, according to material philosophies, in a prison in which matter and its attributes are the fetters which bind us, which we can never overstep; whichever way the material attributes draw us we have to bend. Such is the

invariable conclusion which material philosophers have to come to. How can you deny the operation of laws in nature and call the mind rational, and how can you call the mind rational i. e. acting according to laws and admit of the will being free?

The Buddhist philosophy also in explaining the whole of nature as a series of phenomena governed by a chain of cause and effect, and denying the existence of Soul or an unchanging substance behind, was led to the same conclusion. It says that each cause is produced by an effect and so on in an endless chain and this is sufficient to explain all the phenomena of the universe by the mind and thought and we only perceive phenomena and can get no idea of the unchanging soul behind, which it is gratuitous to assume. But the Buddhists assume that it is possible to break or stop this chain of cause and effect and attain to Nirvana. If all is but a chain of cause and effect, and there is no unchanging substratum then it is impossible for this chain ending itself; for the attempt to break the series of cause and effects will itself be a cause which will produce an effect. Also as an effect cannot overstep its cause, the impulse or motive power to break the chain of causation cannot come from the chain of causation itself; the series of changes; can give rise to another series of changes it can never stop the chain of causes. Karma and the cessation of Karma are contradictory in nature, and the cessation of Karma cannot be brought about by means of the causal chain. The Buddhists were led to atheism by their wrong conception of the law of causation. If matter and the changing phenomena held by the law of Karma be sufficient to explain all the facts of life, and it is quite gratuitous to assume the existence of a

noumenon or Substance, then how is Nirvana, the cessation of all phenomena, possible by means of the phenomenal chain?

So far as external investigation goes, which gives us matter and attributes joined to matter, everything in this material world is bound by strict unbending laws and the ever-increasing attempt to explain every phenomena of nature from within, as modes of operation of necessary inherent laws from the nature of things constitute rationalism and the modern scientific temper. If that is so, everything is regulated by law, every action of ours, every thought we think is caused, the necessary result of previous actions and thoughts in an unbroken chain which we cannot resist; everything is necessary. This knocks the bottom out of the sense of responsibility of man in evil-doing, and provides no incentive to endeavour in stopping one course of life or rectifying or initiating another.

Against such a state of mental or actional serfdom our moral sense revolts and our nature refuses to be bound by it. On the other hand the consciousness of the freedom of action despite a thousand circumstances thwarting it or putting insurmountable barriers before it constitutes a fundamental belief of his nature, which sustains and enthuses him in the midst of the most unfavourable circumstances. Even if every force of nature is knocking him down and thwarting his will he rises up every time saying to himself, 'Although I am held in bondage by everything around, yet I can somehow free myself.' This conviction of the freedom of man is as fundamental and elementary a belief of his mental constitution and as unexplained and unaccounted for by any fact of material phenomena as the other one of the immortality of his being. Although man

sees facts of death all around, although death is the most sure and patent of all facts, yet he never thinks of dying, and cannot believe that this world will be the end of everything. Similarly although he finds thousands of circumstances in this universe circumscribing his will, presenting dead impassable walls before it, yet he goes on believing that he is free or that he can free himself and this belief is the motive power of all his actions. This mixture of freedom and bondage, of immortality and death constitutes our phenomenal universe, and the basic fact of our life.

Systems of religion or philosophy which postulate the existence of Spirit and Soul behind the changing, the caused and causing facts of the universe avoid this state of *non-possumus*, in which everything is bound by the causal chain, every act or thought is caused, leaving no room for human initiative and endeavour,—the conclusion to which every material philosophy denying the existence of Spirit or the Free Soul behind the phenomenal universe is bound to come.

The Vedanta in postulating the existence of a spiritual principle affected by nothing shows the way out of the deadlock of action of material philosophers like Haeckel and the rest. It says that the phenomenal universe is but a fraction of the Infinite Brahman, the uncaused, the unchanging substance projected on the plane of the intellect, and thrown into the mould of time, space and causation. The Brahman or the Atman of man is always free, never bound, can never be bound, but when It somehow mistakenly identifies Itself with names and forms, with mind and matter, and with the meshes of time, space and causation, It is held by the law of causation and comes under its operation. The consciousness of freedom

which as we have seen is a fundamental trait of the human constitution is the freedom of Soul percolating through layers of matters. It is the glimpse of the infinite blue sky behind masses of clouds. Therefore is it that the consciousness of freedom persists in the midst of the bondage of matter, and laughs at all the bondage that we may cast round it. The presence of the Infinite, Free Soul explains the motive-power which man feels to break the chain of Karma; for this motive-power to attain to freedom from the chain of Karma cannot be explained by the law of causation; as an effect cannot transcend its cause, the bondage of the causal chain cannot give rise to the motive-power to break it and be free. The free agency is therefore of the Atman, but by identifying Itself with the ephemeral names and forms of the universe It becomes bound and is dragged from Karma to Karma. And by the effects of pain, by the experience of the facts of bondage and slavery in which It finds Itself, by identifying itself with the mind, the innate Freedom of Atman, which is never lost is roused to self-conscious activity. As It is in itself superior to the causal chain it stands apart, judges the operation of Karma, how from one Karma It is dragged to another; its knowledge is roused, It gives the impulsion contrary to Karma, starts and initiates work negating the effect of past Karma or initiating new Karma for the present. If no spiritual principle such as the Atman ever Free and unbound were admitted as always present, then it is impossible to stand aside from the causal sequence, and attempt either to regulate it, or introduce new factors into it or altogether to stop it; man himself being then an effect of the law of causation would fall in the stream of causation

and go from one Karma to another and would have no independence. Eastern philosophers on the other hand admit a Free Soul at the basis of the whole phenomenal universe which is never bound by it but always remains, Free, Infinite and beyond it. From this Soul comes the impulsion to break the chain of Karma (as all its impulsions are conducive to the regaining of its nature—viz. of Freedom, Oneness, Purity and Immortality); from the phenomenal world comes the impulsion to prolong the causal chain. The two forces, the freedom of the soul and the bondage of the unbounded laws of nature are both facts of the universe, and act and react upon each other. The causal sequence is materially altered and modified by the action of the Spirit. By following the suggestion of the Soul, man succeeds in regulating or transcending the law of causation and being free.

Therefore according to Indian philosophy the law of causation governs but a fraction of the nature of man—that projected on the plane of sense and caught in the meshes of names and forms. Within this it is all bondage, everything governed by laws. From the Atman comes the motive power to break this chain of causation and by following the suggestion and impulsion of the Atman which are towards freedom, and oneness, and by starting and initiating new work besides the causal sequence he succeeds in breaking and rising superior to it. At last by giving up all identification with names and forms, he stands apart from the stream of Karma and established in the Atman, in the state of perfection he is able to control Karma completely, to initiate, alter, modify everything without his being bound by its effects or drawn into the vortex of causation.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

CXXXVIII.

Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna !

1894.

My dear Akhandananda,

I am very glad to receive your letter. It is a great pleasure to me to learn that you have regained your health to a great extent by your stay at Khetri.

T— has done a good deal of work in Madras. Very agreeable news indeed ! I heard much praise of him from the people of Madras.

* * * * *

Try to develop spirituality and philanthropy amongst the Thakurs in the different places of Rajputana. We must work, and this cannot be done by merely sitting idle. Make a trip now and then to Malsisor, Alsisor, and all the other 'sars' that are there. And carefully learn Sanskrit and English. G— is in the Punjab, I presume. Convey my special love to him and bring him to Khetri. Learn Sanskrit with his help, and teach him English. Let me have his address by any means.

* * * * *

Go from door to door amongst the poor and lower classes of the town of Khetri and teach them religion. Also, let them have oral lessons on geography and such other subjects. No good will come of sitting idle and having princely dishes, and saying "Ramakrishna, O Lord!"—unless you can do some good to the poor. Go to other villages from time to time and teach the people the arts of life as well as religion. Work, worship and Jnanam (knowledge)—

first work and your mind will be purified ; otherwise everything will be fruitless like pouring oblations on a pile of ashes instead of in the sacred fire. When G— comes, move from door to door of the poor and the destitute in every village of Rajputana. If people object to the kind of food you take, give it up immediately. It is preferable to live on grass for the sake of doing good to others. The *gerrua* robe is not for enjoyment. It is the banner of heroic work. You must give your body, mind and speech to "the welfare of the world." You have read—*मातृदेवो भव, पितृदेवो भव*—"Look upon your mother as God, look upon your father as God,"—but I say, "*दरिद्रदेवो भव, मूर्खदेवो भव*"—The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted—let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion.

Ever yours, with blessings,

Vivekananda.

CXXXIX.

228 W. 39.

New York, 17th Jan., '95.

Dear—

Your two letters are to hand, as also the two of R— Babu. I have got the bill of lading, but it will be long before the goods arrive. Unless one arranges for the prompt despatch of goods they take about six months to come. It is four months since H— wrote that the *Rudraksha* beads and *kusha* mats had been despatched, but there is no news of their whereabouts yet. The thing is, when the goods reach England, the agent of the company here gives me notice, and about a

month later, the goods arrive. I received your bill of lading about three weeks ago, but no sign of the notice! Only the goods sent by Raja of K— arrive quickly. Most probably he spends a lot of money after them. However, it is a matter of congratulation that goods do arrive without fail in this region of Pátála, at the other end of the globe. I shall let you know as soon as the goods come. Now keep quiet for at least three months! * *

Now is the time for you to apply yourself to start the magazine. Tell R— Babu that though the gentleman of whom he speaks be a competent person, I am not in a position to have anybody in America at present. * * What about your article on Tibet? When it is published in the Mirror, send me a copy. * * Come, here is a task for you, conduct that magazine. Thrust it on people and make them subscribe to it, and don't be afraid. What work do you expect from men of little hearts?—Nothing in the world! You must have an iron will if you would cross the ocean. You must be strong enough to pierce mountains. I am coming next winter, We shall set the world on fire,—let those who will, join us and be blessed, and those that won't come, would lag behind for ever and ever; let them do so. You gird up your loins and keep yourself ready. * * Never mind anything! In your lips and hands the Goddess of Learning will make Her seat; the Lord of infinite power will be seated on your chest; you will do works that will strike the world with wonder. By the bye, can't you shorten your name a bit, my boy? What a long, long name!—a single name enough to fill a volume! Well, you hear people say that the Lord's name keeps away death! It is not the simple name 'Hari,' mind you. It is those deep and sonorous names, such as अघभग्नरक्विनाशन (Destroyer of Agha, Bhaga, and Naraka), त्रिपुरमदभञ्जन (Subduer of the pride of Tripura, demon of the "three cities"), and अशेषनिःशेषकल्याणकर

(Giver of infinite and endless blessings) and so forth—that put to route King Death and his whole party. Won't it look nice if you simplify yours a little? But it is too late, I am afraid, as it has already been abroad. But, believe me, it is a world-entrancing, death-defying name that you have got! †

Yours affectionately,

Vivekananda.

P. S. Throw the whole of Bengal and, for the matter of that, the whole of India into convulsion! Start centres at different places.

The Bhagavatam has reached me—a very nice edition indeed, but people of this country have not the least inclination for studying Sanskrit, hence there is very little hope for its sale. There may be a little in England, for, there many are interested in the study of Sanskrit. Give my special thanks to the editor. I hope his noble attempt will meet with complete success. I shall try my best to push his book here. I have sent his prospectus to different places. Tell R— Babu that a flourishing trade can be set on foot with England and America in *mung dāl*, *arhar dāl* &c. *Dāl* soup will have a go if properly introduced. There will be a good demand for them if they be sent from house to house, in small packets, with directions for cooking on them and a depot started for storing a quantity of them. Similarly *Barhis* ‡ too will have a good market. We want an enterprising spirit. Nothing is done by leading idle lives. If any one forms a company and exports Indian goods here and into England, it will be a good trade. But they are a lazy set. * *

† The full name which Swami Trigunatita, to whom this letter was addressed, bore at first was "Swami Trigunatitananda,"—hence the Swamiji's pleasantry about it.

‡ Made of dāl pounded into a paste, beaten, and made into pellets.

A VISIT TO THE LORD'S FARM.

(REMINISCENCES.)*

ABOUT twenty-five miles from New York City, on the main line to Paterson is a small railway station called Woodcliff. And about a mile from the station is a farm, called the Lord's Farm. It was with the intention of paying a visit to this farm that we, three friends, alighted at the Woodcliff station one beautiful Saturday evening in May or June, many years ago. We were in the State of New Jersey, a beautiful agricultural country, spotted with farms of different size. Every place looked prosperous, with good buildings and well-kept orchards. The Lord's Farm, we found, made no exception. The house and barn were in first class condition and the twenty-five acres of ground were in splendid trim. The main produce of the place consisted of a large variety of choice fruits, vegetables and hay. In the stable we found six well-fed and well-groomed horses. There were no other animals on the place, no cows, no dog, not even a cat. In this respect the place was different from others of its kind, for no farmer in any well-settled part of America will be without his milk cow, his four-footed companion the dog and a cat to keep the vermin down. The reason for this rather singular omission on an otherwise so well-equipped a farm will be clear later on. But let us first make acquaintance with the inhabitants of the place. For it was not to see the farm or the animals that we had decided to spend a week-end at the Lord's Farm. It was to meet the people living there, of whom strange reports had reached us through the newspapers, who seemed to take delight in picturing these good people as religious cranks.

In America, and perhaps more or less in every civilised country, it is difficult to escape the newspaper reporter, as soon as one deviates, be it ever so little, from the trodden path of convention. What to speak of the Lord's Farm people for whom the word convention had no meaning, who walked not according to the ordinary custom of

man, but who were guided by the dictates of their hearts and a refined conscience, or, as they themselves expressed it, by the Voice of God. That such people were considered as eccentric by their neighbours, need not surprise us. They are eccentric in so far as they step aside from the usual course followed by man. All saints are eccentric,—they are not like ordinary people, they stand on a different platform, they act from different motives. But when this eccentricity expresses itself in outward signs, the consequences have to be met. And so our good friends of the Lord's Farm had to meet the ridicule and often the ill-will of those who did not understand their motives.

In appearance the three or four male members of the happy family reminded us of the patriarchs of the Old Testament, on account of their long hair and beards. Otherwise they looked like ordinary farmers. The woman, sister of one of the men, was of the New England type, a beautiful, open face, with regular features. None were married. The dress was of the simplest pattern and every thing looked neat and clean.

Ceremonies were not observed. We were welcomed in a simple manner and seats were offered us. "Well, friends, who are ye," said one of the men. We introduced ourselves, but before we had gone the round, we were told that they did not care whether we were Mr. or Mrs. or Miss so and so. "Just tell us your first names," they said, "for we call everyone by his or her Christian name."

"Oh, your name is Cornelius and your name Henry and your name Marion? That will do. We will call you by these names. And this is Blaudine, and this is John and here is Titus. My name is Mnason."

"No! not Mr. Mnason, just simply Mnason. Would it not have sounded strange, if Jesus had addressed his brethren as Mr. John and Mr. Peter? We follow his example and we regard all people alike; we make no distinctions. And we do not

* With apology for free rendering and inaccuracies. I have no notes to refresh my memory.

look upon you as strangers. Whoever enters this place is looked upon as sent by the Lord, for this is His farm. We only live here as His stewards, but the place belongs to Him. So every one who enters here has the same rights and privileges. The place belongs as much to you as it belongs to us. So be perfectly at home. And now the food is on the table and every one is welcome to sit down and help himself. No ceremonies, remember. Take what you want and take plenty of it. The Lord has always kept us in abundance.

"Why, Cornelius, dost not thee † like the food? Oh, I see, there is no carcass. That we have given up long ago. I used to eat dead bodies, but the Lord told me to stop it. So no flesh ever appears on this table.

"Oh, ye are vegetarians? Well, then it is nothing strange to thee.

"Salt and pepper? No, we do not use anything to tickle the nerves or to feed the animal tendency in man. The Lord does not want us to use spices or anything that comes from an animal. So we do not even keep a cow. The less we have to do with animals the better. If we could employ electricity, we would not have the horses either. That may come in time. But as long as we have to use horses, we take good care of them."

"But Mnason," one of us remarked, "butter and milk are wholesome and nourishing food!"

"Yea, my friend, that may be so. But the Lord told Blaudine, in a dream, not to take it. So she gave it up. And then we thought that if the Lord wanted her to renounce it, it would perhaps please Him, if we all did so. So one after the other, we let it go. And we feel none the worse for it. You see, we have a kingly table after all, so many kinds of vegetables and fruits and peanut butter. And John used to be a baker. Taste his bread, it is made of whole wheat. Is not it good? And all the food has its natural flavor and it is pure and sweet.

"No, we do not smoke. The Lord would not have it. Once I disobeyed and the Lord hid Himself from me. How I suffered! First I did not know why the Lord did not speak to me any more.

I was very miserable. Then I prayed and I said to the Lord: 'Lord, art Thou angry with me? Why dost Thou hide Thyself from me?'

"Now, the Lord had told me to give up smoking. So I gave up smoking cigars. But a cigarette now and then, I thought, would not hurt. But when I prayed to the Lord, what do ye think happened? Well, would ye believe it, there was a big cigarette standing in front of me. It was in a vision. 'My Lord!' I said, 'does this miserable cigarette stand between Thee and me? That will soon end.' And I ran outside, for I was praying in a church, and I took all the cigarettes I had in my pocket and threw them on the pavement. Then I began to jump on them and to crush them with my feet till they were dust. Some boys saw me do this and they said: 'Mister, what are you doing? Give us the cigarettes.' But I said: 'Nay, my boys, they are from the devil, they took me away from God.' The boys thought me mad and they ran away. That was the last of my smocking."

Mnason looked like a man of about fifty. One of our party asked him how old he was. "I have no age, my friend," was the reply, "I am from eternity to eternity, for I do not count this body. It is God, the Father, who dwells here. And He is beyond age."

"But, Mnason," I ventured, "this is the same as saying that you are God. And God is all-knowing. Then you also must be all-knowing."

"Now, Cornelius, what art thou saying? Yea, God is all-knowing and *I am also all-knowing*. But through this temple, God does not know every thing of worldly affairs. That belongs to the creature man. Ye see, this body was only six months in school, so it does not know much about your books and philosophies. But *I know that I am the eternal Spirit*. Jesus knew that he was the son of God, one with the Father. But he did not know your sciences. Still, he was God. And he *knew it*.

"People get angry when I tell them that I am one with the Father,—the Truth that is and was and always will be. They call me a blasphemer and they persecute me. Once a party of church-people came after me. They were holding a revival meeting. I knew these people. They were preaching the highest Truth, but they lived according to the flesh. I could not endure it. So

† Thee, thou and ye, I think, were used rather indiscriminately as also the corresponding verb-endings. 'You,' was never used.

I got up in the meeting and told them that they were hypocrites and that they would go to hell if they did not change their ways. They got so angry that they threw me in the street. I entered the meeting again and repeated what I had said. Then they called a policeman and had me arrested for disturbing the peace. And I had to spend three days in jail.

"When I came out of jail, I went to their meeting again, but I kept silent. But they became furious seeing me and they said that they would teach me a lesson. Well, a few days later, when I was walking in the street, it was in a small town, a party of men took hold of me. One of them said: 'You say you are God?' 'Yea, Hallelujah!' I replied. Then he struck me a blow in the face. 'Say it again!' he said. I replied: 'Yea, amen, I am He.' Then they took a rope, tied my hands and dragged me to a secluded spot where they were going to tar and feather† me. I shouted all the time: 'Praise the Lord!' They kicked me and beat me, but I could not remain silent. Then they put me on a box and said: 'Repeat it again and we will apply the tar.' 'Friends,' I said, 'I shall praise my Lord as long as I live. If ye want me to keep silent, ye will have to cut out my tongue. And if ye do that and ye kill me, I shall take another body and I shall speak the same truth.' I do not know why, but to my surprise they untied my hands and let me go free."

"But Mnason," I said, "have you no fear?"

"I have only one fear, Cornelius," he replied. "I fear fear. I fear that sometimes fear may overtake me, when doing the will of the Father. But as long as I obey Him, I fear nothing. The Lord is my Beloved, how can I fear? No one can separate us, we are eternally united. 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me.'"

"Now, let us step inside. Would thee like to hear a song? Blaudine is my song book. She knows many songs. Come, we will sing together."

We went inside. Mnason and Blaudine sang together, Mnason playing softly on a small organ. It sounded very sweet. But sweeter than the songs was the expression on Mnason's face. He looked

inspired. Blaudine had a clear voice. Her appearance was simple, pure and holy.

"Ever Thine, Thine alone
Yes Beloved, Thine I 'll be.
It is in life my one ambition
Day and night to live in Thee."

These were the last lines.

I asked, where they got the songs from, for I did not remember having ever heard them before.

"They came to me at different times," Mnason said. "Some have come to me in jail, for I was put in jail several times. I had nothing to do there but talk to the Lord. And He gave me these songs. I had a lovely time in jail. The Spirit was always with me. Ah! What ecstasies, what revelations came to me! How many days and nights I have spent in close communion with God! I hardly knew where I was or what I was doing. The jailer thought that there was something wrong with me and he called the prison doctor. And when the doctor came I spoke to him about God."

"But I have been much persecuted, for I always do and speak, as the Spirit leads me. So, sometimes I have to be rude and hurt people's feelings. I have to address every one with 'thee' and 'thou' and persons in high position get offended. They want to be treated with great respect and to see their titles used when they are addressed. But I cannot do that. I would speak the same to the President as I do to the poorest beggar. So, many times false charges were brought against me and I was never left in peace. I used to feel sorely grieved. Then, one day, I spoke to the Lord and said: 'Lord, this world is a wicked place. I want to do thine will, but people would not let me. I have no place where to go at night and when I am found in the street moneyless they lock me up. Give me a place where I can live in peace. There is no freedom in this world. Give me a place and every one who comes there will be free to do and speak as he likes. It will be a place of perfect freedom!'

"The Lord granted my prayer. First He led me to the house of Titus. I knew Titus and I loved him for his purity and simplicity. One day he told me that he had a sister who was ill and asked me to see her. I went to their home and seeing Blaudine I was moved to lay my hands on her head. She said: 'What is this? I feel better.'

† A punishment inflicted by smearing a person with heated tar and then covering him with feathers.

From that moment she began to recover her health. Many people were cured that way. But the spirit told me to stop it. People used to come to me with handkerchiefs or other small things belonging to sick people. I would touch the articles and the patients would get cured. Then, one day, a man came to me and said: 'Mnason, we can make a fine business out of that. I shall rent a nice office and there the people can come and you can cure them, charging a fee.' I got very angry. 'Shame on thee,' I said, 'to sell God's power! Did Jesus take money for healing the sick?'

"Well, Titus had this farm. But it was dreadfully neglected. No one lived there. He told me about the place and expressed his wish that we three should live there. I saw the hand of God in this, so I consented. And we have been here ever since. It does not look like the old place now. We have worked awfully hard to remove the stones and put it in shape.

"Later on, John came and joined us. He used to do a good deal of street-preaching. And he spoke as the Lord gave him to speak. But John looks so funny, with his long beard and hair and his short stature, that the boys used to make fun of him. They would pull his hair and beard. But John would only smile at them and go on preaching. Sometimes they would pull off his hat and run away with it. But John only smiled. And the boys always came back after a while and returned the hat. He never got angry. He says, the Lord does all these things. Here, he is happy and he can do and talk just as he likes.

"Some time ago, John went to Paterson for a wagon-load of coal for our winter supply. He had a long distance to go and we expected him back in the evening. At last he came up the road, but he did not turn in here. He went right on. An hour or so later he came back with the empty wagon. 'John,' I said, 'what hast thou done with the coal?' Then he began to laugh and said: 'Oh, I have had such fun. Here I came with the coal and I was just about to turn in the gate when the Lord said: 'John, where art thou going?' 'Well, Lord,' I said, 'I have come back with the coal.' Then the Lord said: 'Drive on, John, do not go in the gate.' 'Yea Lord,' I said, and I drove on. Then I came to the little house where the people are so poor. 'John,' said the Lord,

'thou knowest these people are poor. And they have no coal for the winter. Better give them the coal.' 'Yea, Lord,' I said, 'Thy will be done.' And so I went to the house and told the people that the Lord had sent them a wagon-load of coal. You ought to have seen their faces. They did not know what to say or to do. I said: 'Well, good people, where shall I put the coal?' They thought that something was wrong and they kept silent looking at each other. But I looked around and found a place and there I dumped the coal. It was such fun! They said: 'Thank you, John, but we did not order any coal!' Then I told them what the Lord had done. And they said: 'Praise the Lord.' I said 'The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' And then I came away."

"Now," said Mnason, after telling the story, "was not that fine? And you know, it is more blessed to give than to receive."

In later years I discovered for myself how exceedingly charitable, generous and honest these people were in all their dealings.

Once I asked Mnason: "Do you worship Jesus?"

"I worship only the Father, which is God, the Eternal Truth," he replied. "But we must all become like Jesus, sons of God. In the Father we must all become united. In my earlier career I had many visions of Jesus. I used to see him and talk with him. It was glorious! And sometimes the apostles would come to me and sometimes angels.

"I used to be very clever at wood-carving. So once I made a very beautiful image of Jesus. After much labour it was finished and I loved that little image. But it was soon taken away from me. One day I was looking at it with great tenderness. Then the Voice spoke to me. 'Mnason,' It said, 'dost thou want an image or dost thou want me?' I said: Nay, my Lord, I want Thee!' Then I understood that I was giving my love to a piece of wood. And I remembered that 'God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' I took the image and broke it to pieces. Ye see, God is a jealous God. He wants to possess us altogether. But it is so sweet to be His and His alone.

"One day I had a very wonderful experience. Jesus came to me and I was filled with such a joy that I could scarcely endure it. In extreme ecstasy I became dead to the world. I knew nothing but him. Then this beautiful figure began to melt away as light, spreading in all directions. Then I became united with that light and I lost all sense of separateness. There was neither Jesus nor Mnason,—only the One Spirit of Truth. Then I knew that I was the same Spirit that spoke through Jesus and that there is only the One Spirit. And that Spirit now speaks through this mouth and acts through this temple. After that I did not see Jesus so much. Cornelius, what shall I tell thee! Those that have ears to hear, let them hear. To others I shall be an offence."

There was a long silence. Mnason seemed lost in memory and we dared not break the spell. At last he said: "But the Voice is never silent. Lo, He is with me always. And I always obey the Voice."

"Will you tell us, Mnason, how the Voice first spoke to you?" "Yea," he said, "I will tell thee."

But our week-end was spent and the story had to be kept over for a future occasion. We woke up to the fact that there was but just time to catch our train and to ask the holy man's blessing and his permission to visit them again.

On our way home we compared notes. "What do you think of them?" asked one of us. Another replied: "They are good people, but they are so

fanatic. Why can't they act like other people? I see no sense in letting your hair and beard grow long and making yourself the laughing-stock for every one. It is foolish. They are hospitable and I am glad that we went, but I am not going again."

"Well," said the third, "You may call them fanatic and foolish, but do you remember what St. Paul said? 'We are fools for Christ's sake.' Is not it the same with them? They are told by the Spirit to do these things. They walk in perfect obedience to God's will. Their love for God, their trust in Him, their courage and sincerity,—I think it is marvellous. And Mnason's realisations are wonderful. I was thrilled when he told us how he realised his oneness with the Spirit. And I believe him to be genuine, not simply a talker. He is an illiterate man, he knows nothing of Vedanta or philosophy, he never heard of such realisations and still he experienced them. That seems so remarkable to me. He has experienced Truth and he lives up to his belief. I also do not like these outward things. But what does it matter? They are sincere and that is the one thing that matters. Anyhow their lives are holy and pure. And I like them. I want to go again."

"All right," said the first speaker, "I am with you. I also believe them to be perfectly sincere. I enjoyed our visit immensely. Let us go again."

And so, the following Saturday afternoon, we two took the train again and paid our second visit to the Lord's Farm.

GURUDASA.

VIVEKACHUDAMANI

(Continued from page 163.)

उच्छ्वासनिःश्वासाविजृम्भणश्चूत-

प्रस्यन्दनाद्युत्क्रमणादिकाः क्रियाः ।

प्राणादिकर्माणि वदन्ति तज्ज्ञाः

प्राणस्य धर्मावशनापिपासे ॥१०२॥

102. Inhalation and exhalation, yawning, sneezing, secretion, and leaving this body etc. are called by experts functions of Prána and the rest, while hunger and

thirst are characteristics of Prána proper.

अन्तःकरणमेतेषु चक्षुरादिषु वर्ष्मणि ।

अहमित्यभिमानेन तिष्ठत्याभासतेजसा ॥१०३॥

103. The inner organ (mind) has its seat in the organs such as the eye etc., as well as in the body, identifying itself with them and endued with a reflection of the Atman.

महङ्गुरः स विज्ञेयः कर्ता भोक्ताभिमान्ययम् ।
सत्त्वादिगुणयोगेन चावस्थात्रयमश्नुते ॥१०४॥

104. Know that it is Egoism which, identifying itself with the body, becomes the doer or enjoyer and in conjunction with the Gunas such as the Sattva, assumes the three different states.

[*Gunas*—the three component factors of Prakriti.
Different states—those of waking etc.]

विषयाणामानुकूल्ये सुखी दुःखी विपर्यये ।

सुखं दुःखं च तद्धर्मः सदानन्दस्य नात्मनः ॥१०५॥

105. When the sense-objects are favourable it becomes happy, and it becomes miserable when the case is contrary. So happiness and misery are the characteristics of egoism, and not of the ever-blissful Atman.

आत्मार्थत्वेन हि प्रेयान्विषयो न स्वतः प्रिय ।

स्वत एव हि सर्वेषामात्मा प्रियतमो यतः ।

तत आत्मा सदानन्दो नास्य दुःखं कदाचन ॥१०६॥

106. Sense-objects are pleasurable only as dependent on the Atman manifesting through them, and not independently, because the Atman is by its very nature the most beloved of all. Therefore the Atman is ever blissful, and never suffers misery.

[*Vide Bri. Upa.*—Yājñavalkya's teachings to his wife Maitreyi.]

यत्सुषुप्तौ निर्विषय आत्मानन्दोऽनुभूयते ।

श्रुतिप्रत्यक्षमैतिह्यमनुमानं च जाग्रति ॥१०७॥

107. That in profound sleep we experience the bliss of Atman independent of sense-objects, is clearly attested by Sruti, direct perception, tradition, and inference.

[*Sruti*—Chhândogya, Brihadâraṇyaka, Kausitaki and other Upanishads.

Ja-grati—is a plural verb.]

अव्यक्तनाम्नी परमेष्ठयक्ति-

रनाद्यविद्या त्रिगुणात्मिका परा ।

कार्यानुमेषा सुभियैव माया

यया जगत्सर्वमिदं प्रसूयते ॥१०८॥

108. Avidya (Nescience) or Maya, called also the Undifferentiated, is the power of the Lord. It is without beginning, is made up of the three Gunas and is superior to the effects (as their cause). She is to be inferred by one of clear intellect only from the effects She produces. It is She who brings forth this whole universe.

[*The Undifferentiated*—the perfectly balanced state of the three Gunas, where there is no manifested universe. When this balance is disturbed, then evolution begins.

Power of the Lord.—This distinguishes the Vedantic conception of Maya from the Sankhya view of Prakriti which they call insentient and at the same time independent.]

सन्नाप्यसन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो

भिन्नाप्यभिन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो ।

साङ्गाप्यनङ्गा ह्युभयात्मिका नो

महाद्भुताऽनिर्वचनीयरूपा ॥१०९॥

109. She is neither existent nor non-existent nor partaking of both characters; neither same nor different nor both;—neither composed of parts nor an indivisible whole nor both; She is most wonderful and cannot be described in words.

शुद्धाद्वयब्रह्मविवोधनाश्या

सर्पश्मो रज्जुविवेकतो यथा ।

रजस्तमःसत्त्वमिति प्रसिद्धा

गुणास्तदीयाः प्रथितैः स्वकार्यैः ॥११०॥

110. This Maya can be destroyed by the realisation of the pure Brahman, the one without a second, just as the mistaken idea of a snake is removed by the discrimination of the rope. She has her Gunas known as Rajas, Tamas and Sattva, named after their respective functions.

विज्ञेयशक्ती रजसः क्रियात्मिका

यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ।

रागादयोऽस्याः प्रभवन्ति नित्यं

दुःखादयो ये मनसो विकाराः ॥१११॥

111. Rajas has its Vikshepa-Shakti or projecting power which is of the nature of an activity, and from which this primeval flow of activity has emanated. From this also, the mental modifications such as attachment and the rest and grief and the like are continually produced.

[*Vikshepa-shakti*—that power which at once projects a new form when once the real nature of a thing has been veiled by the *avarana-shakti*, mentioned later in Sloka 113.

Primeval flow etc.—i. e. the phenomenal world, alternately evolving and going back into an involved state. Cf. Gita xv. 4.]

कामः क्रोधो लोभदम्भाद्यसूया-

ऽहङ्कारेर्ष्यामत्सरश्चास्तु घोराः ।

धर्मा एते राजसाः पुम्प्रवृत्ति-

र्यस्मादेवा तद्रजो बन्धहेतुः ॥११२॥

112. Lust, anger, avarice, arrogance, spite, egoism, envy and jealousy etc.—these are the dire attributes of Rajas, from which this worldly tendency of man is produced. Therefore Rajas is a cause of bondage.

एषाऽऽवृत्तिर्नाम तमोगुणस्य,

शक्तिर्यया वस्त्ववभासतेऽन्यथा ।

सैषा निदानं पुरुषस्य संसृते-

र्विक्षेपशक्तेः प्रवणस्य हेतुः ॥११३॥

113. *Avriti* or the veiling power is the power of Tamas which makes things appear other than what they are. It is this that causes man's repeated transmigrations, and starts the action of the projecting power (*Vikshepa*).

प्रज्ञावानपि परिडतोऽपि चतुरोऽप्यत्यन्तसूक्ष्मात्मह-
ग्यालीढस्तमसा न वेत्ति बहुधा संबोधितोऽपि
स्फुटम् ।

भ्रान्त्यारोपितमेव साधु कलयत्यालम्बते तद्गुणान्
हन्तासौ प्रबला दुरन्ततमसः शक्तिर्महत्यावृत्तिः ॥

114. Even wise and learned men and men who are clever and adepts in the vision of the exceedingly subtle Atman are

overpowered by Tamas and do not understand the Atman even though clearly explained in various ways. What is simply superimposed by delusion, they consider as true, and attach themselves to its effects. Alas! How powerful is the great *Avriti* Shakti of dreadful Tamās!

अभावना वा विपरीतभावनाऽ-

संभावना विप्रतिपत्तिरस्याः ।

संसर्गयुक्तं न विमुञ्चति ध्रुवं

विक्षेपशक्तिः क्षपयत्यजस्रम् ॥११५॥

115. Absence of right judgment, or contrary judgment, want of definite belief and doubt—these certainly never desert one who has any connection with this “veiling power” and then the “projecting power” gives ceaseless trouble.

[*Want of definite belief*—in the existence of a thing even though there may be a vague notion of it.]

अज्ञानमालस्यजडत्वनिद्रा-

प्रमादमूढत्वमुखास्तमोगुणाः ।

एतैः प्रयुक्तो न हि वेत्ति किञ्चि-

न्निद्रालुवत्स्तम्भवदेव तिष्ठति ॥११६॥

116. Ignorance, lassitude, dulness, sleep, inadvertence and stupidity etc. are attributes of Tamas. One tied to these does not comprehend anything but remains like one asleep or like a stock or stone.

[*Stock or stone*—lit. pillar.]

सत्त्वं विशुद्धं जलवत्तथापि,

ताभ्यां मिलित्वा सरणाय कल्पते ।

यत्रात्मविम्बः प्रतिविम्बितः सन्

प्रकाशयत्यर्क इवाखिलं जडम् ॥११७॥

117. Pure Sattva is (clear) like water, yet in conjunction with Rajas and Tamas makes for transmigration. A glimpse of the Atman becomes reflected in the Sattva and like the sun reveals the entire world of matter.

मिश्रस्य सत्त्वस्य भवन्ति धर्मा-

स्वमानिताया नियमा यमायाः ।

श्रद्धा च भक्तिश्च मुमुक्षुता च

देवी च सत्पत्तिरसन्नितृप्तिः ॥११८॥

118. The traits of mixed Sattva are an utter absence of pride etc. and Niyamas and Yama etc., as well as faith, devotion, yearning for liberation, the divine tendencies and turning away from the unreal.

[*Absence of pride etc.* The reference is to the higher attributes enumerated in the Bhagavad-Gita XIII. 8-12.

Yama—Non-killing, truthfulness etc. *Niyama*—Purity, contentment etc. Vide Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms III. 30 & 32.

Divine tendencies—The reference is to the opening Slokas of Gita, Ch. XVI.]

विशुद्धसत्त्वस्य गुणाः प्रसादः

स्वात्मानुभूतिः परमा प्रशान्तिः ।

तृप्तिः प्रहर्षः परमात्मनिष्ठा

यया सदानन्दरसं समृच्छति ॥११९॥

119. The traits of pure Sattva are cheerfulness, the realisation of one's own Self, supreme peace, contentment, bliss, and steady devotion for the Atman, by which the aspirant enjoys bliss everlasting.

[*Pure Sattva*—Sattva unmixed with Rajas and Tamas elements.]

अव्यक्तमेतत्त्रिगुणैर्निरुक्तं

तत्कारणं नाम शरीरमात्मनः ।

सुषुप्तिरेतस्य विभक्त्यवस्था

प्रवीनसर्वेन्द्रियबुद्धिवृत्तिः ॥१२०॥

120. This Undifferentiated spoken of as the compound of the three Gunas is the causal body of the soul. Profound sleep is its special state, in which the functions of the mind and all its organs are suspended.

[*Undifferentiated*—*Avyaktam*, mentioned in Sloka 108 and following.

Of the soul—identifying itself through ignorance with this or the other two bodies.

The functions.....*suspended*—not in perfect

knowledge as in Samadhi, but in ignorance. This is the differentia between these two states.]

सर्वप्रकारप्रमितिप्रशान्ति-

र्वीजात्मनावस्थितिरेव बुद्धेः ।

सुषुप्तिरेतस्य किल प्रतीतिः

किञ्चिन्न वेदीति जगत्प्रसिद्धेः ॥१२१॥

121. Profound sleep is the cessation of all kinds of perception, in which the mind remains in a subtle, seed-like form. The test of this is the universal verdict that I did not know anything then.

[*All kinds of perception*—including remembrance and delusion also.

The universal verdict &c.—This negative remembrance proves the continuity of the mind even in the *sushupti* state.]

देहेन्द्रियप्राणमनोऽहमादयः

सर्वे विकारा विषयाः सुखादयः ।

व्योमादिभूतान्यखिलं च विश्व-

मव्यक्तपर्यन्तमिदं ह्यनात्मा ॥१२२॥

122. The body and the organs, the Pranas, Manas and Egoism etc., all forms of function, the sense-objects, pleasures and the rest, the gross elements such as the ether and so forth, in fact, the whole universe, up to the Undifferentiated—all this is Not-self.

[This and the next Sloka set forth what we are to avoid identifying ourselves with. We are the Pure Self, eternally free from all duality.]

माया मायाकार्यं सर्वं महदादिदेहपर्यन्तम् ।

असदिदमनात्मतत्त्वं विद्धि त्वं मरुमरीचिका-

कल्पम् ॥१२३॥

123. From Mahat down to the gross body everything is the effect of Maya : These and Maya Herself know thou to be Non-self and therefore unreal like the mirage in a desert.

[*Mahat*.—Cosmic Intelligence. It is the first to proceed from Prakriti or Maya. For the hierarchy vide Katha Upa. I. iii. 10-11.]

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS

AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The Hermit—is a new monthly magazine published from Lucknow devoted to a wide range of subjects such as Yoga, Tantra, Vedanta, Sankhya, Mysticism, Spiritualism, Astrology, Mesmerism, Clairvoyance, Theosophy, New Thought etc. Some of the articles are remarkably short; indeed there is an attempt to include all sorts of nondescript matters from all sources bearing on these subjects. The wide variety of its articles gives it a catholic character, but a large number of short excerpts and references brought together without any underlying unity, give it a rather fragmentary and scrappy aspect. Nevertheless some of the articles bearing on subjects of essential interest in religion and philosophy connected with high and fruitful living are both instructive and beneficial for study. But these are swamped by a considerable portion of reading matter dealing with mere occult or psychic phenomena, appealing only to the *curious* and spectacular in man and looked upon in real religious life as bye-products of spiritual life. If it is the desire of the promoters of this magazine to help the cause of true religion and philosophy so as to make it an element of strength and noble and fruitful living, it is our humble suggestion to them to deal more with the everlasting principles of religion and philosophy, and not so much with the mere curious facts of occult and psychic phenomena. These though containing grains of truth, are not of permanent and vitalising influence in spiritual life, and are looked upon by our sages, when dabbled too much in, as weakening and as obstacles in the path of spiritual progress.

The Devalaya Review. A new quarterly magazine started under the auspices of the Devalaya Association and devoted to the religious, social and educational progress of all communities and published from the Devalaya Office 210/3/2 Cornwallis Street. It is a small magazine of crown size, containing short readable articles on philosophical, religious, and social subjects. It is catholic in its tone. We wish it all success.

Swami Vivekananda Charit (Part V. in Marhatti. Edited by Ramchandra Narayan Mandlik.—To be had of the Editor, Ramtirtha Karyalaya, Girgaon, Bombay. Price Re. 1-2.

Pamphlets on—

J. N. Tata, a sketch of his life and career.

Mahatma Gandhi—a sketch of his life and career.

Sir Subramanya Iyer—a sketch of his life and career.

Published by Messrs. G.A. Natesan & Co. Price 4 as.

Mahammad Ali Jinnah, Ambassador of Unity, with a Foreword by the Rajah of Mahmudabad.

Heroes of the Hour, with a proem by K. Vyasa Rao.

Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras.

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated in the premises of Raghunath Mandir, Fatah Kadal, Srinagar, Kashmir, on the 2nd June 1918. The temple hall was tastefully decorated and photos and pictures of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda, Sri Sri Sankaracharya were beautifully garlanded. The hall was filled with landlords, merchants, pleaders, teachers, clerks and students of several schools and of Sri Pratap College. The assembled devotees by their songs attended with music created an intensely devotional atmosphere on the occasion. In the end Pandit Haragopal Kaul, Secretary, Sanatan Dharma Sabha thanked H. H. The Maharaja Saheb of Kashmir under whose kind patronage the Dharma Sabha is working. There were rejoicings throughout the evening and with the distribution of Prasad the meeting came to a close with joyous shouts of "Guru Maharaj ki Jai." It is a pleasure to notice that people in remote Kashmir are waking up to and receiving the message and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and the organisers of the work are to be congratulated on their labours in the cause.

SWAMI Paramananda, of Vedanta Centre, Boston, U. S. A. visited Seattle in connection with Vedanta preaching work, where his work met with eminent success. He delivered public lectures which had overflowing attendance and held private classes and interviews. A great many people

were interested in the teachings of the Vedanta and there was an insistent demand for a permanent centre which the Swami did not feel it possible to consider for the present. Many hundreds of books and pamphlets on the Vedanta were also bought. The Swami also visited Tocoma and Portland where he delivered lectures and came to Los Angeles. At Los Angeles he gave many lectures and held classes in the Vedanta Centre there and also delivered a series of lectures at the New Thought Convention in Los Angeles, at the Buddhist Temple in Pasadena and at Santa Barbara. All these evidences of interest testify to a growing recognition of the value of the Vedanta teaching.

MAHASAMADHI.

As we were going to the press, the sad news reached us of the Mahasamadhi of His Holiness Swami Premanandaji Maharaj, on the afternoon of the 30th July, 1918, at 57 Ramkanto Bose's Street, Calcutta. Dearly beloved of his Master Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he was one of his nearest disciples and held high in the estimation of his Master. He gave himself so unreservedly and with such complete self-abandonment to the cause of his Master and his brother, the Swami Vivekananda, to whose memory he was so unflinchingly loyal, that his evangelical labours for the uplift of suffering humanity which he prosecuted with passionate zeal and enthusiasm in East Bengal and elsewhere, told on his health and his body was attacked with a fell-disease, the *kala-azar*. Suffering from this cruel disease for a period of nearly 14 months he had an attack of Pneumonia, which proved fatal; he renounced his body and his soul soared high on the wings of meditation. Those of us to whom it has been the privilege to have known and loved him feel that in him a Great Soul came down to us and lived and trod this world of death and change for a time in order to show us "the way, the truth and the life"; and after

a whole life of continuous love and blessings and spiritual enlightenment, when his work is finished, he has entered for ever the realms of bliss and immortality. His body was taken to the Belur Math and cremated there on the banks of the Ganges.

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Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by

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